

MICHAEL CHRISTIDIS ART



AFTER THE WIND

Forest Storm Damage

BEHIND THE SCENES

After the Wind Project — Method

This series of eight mixed-media works on paper are about the power of raw nature. These paintings are of a forested area hit by a tornado. Working with such subject matter is challenging enough but my biggest challenge was how to best reflect the feeling of the storm and a sense of the severity of the damage it caused.

Here is an example of one of the finished works followed by an explanation of the approach I took to making this series.



My Creative Process

I started by making hand-coated (photographic) emulsion prints and worked on them manually to introduce a distressed appearance. These were then photographed and I made pigmented ink prints on watercolour paper from them. I painted on these with watercolours, and then I treated each with three different applications of wax.

Here is where the magic of wax came in. Wax served three purposes with these works:

1. An initial thin application of wax that permeated the watercolour paper fibres added more contrast and darkened pigments, creating a more three dimensional look.
2. Adding an even coating of wax selectively to specific areas of the painting created translucent areas (due to wax buildup) that slightly blurred what was underneath.
3. I used a final wax application to create a water ripple ice-like surface with visual qualities of both moving and frozen water.

The translucent areas on the surface of the paper make parts of the image appear blurry, like looking out a window during a rainstorm or through a layer of ice at something within. I simulated this effect by randomly coating areas of the painting with varying thicknesses of wax.

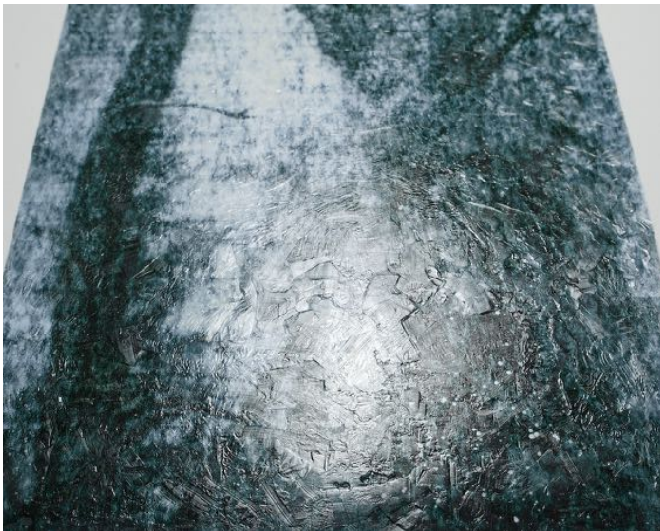
I created the final surface texture by applying a thick layer of wax over the entire image, then carved into it creating valleys and ridges such that, when they reflect light, the surface texture looks like water in motion though frozen as if in a photograph.



Artwork drying in the studio.



A photo of me polishing a painting after the final application of wax had cured.



This is a photo of the surface characteristics where I applied the final thick coating of wax that I then carved away by hand to create the water ripple ice-like textures. These textures uniformly cover the entire surface of each artwork.

In photographing the finished artworks, the lighting used favoured showing the images underneath versus their surface textures. This is why the surface characteristics are barely visible in the photos of the works.

Here, you can see the overall effects of the various wax applications—the translucency of the wax where it was more heavily applied (2nd application) as seen through the final “carved” 3rd application:

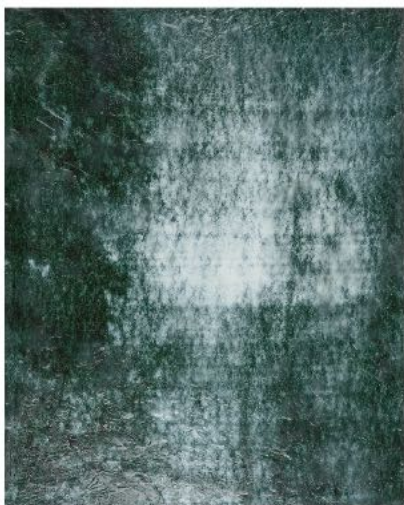
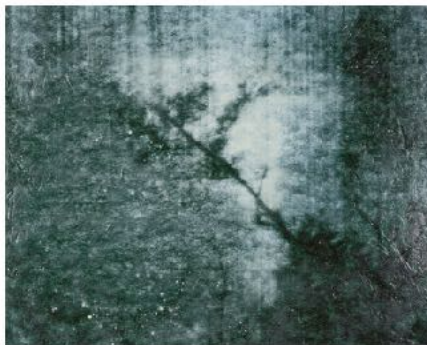


The artwork dimensions are all 11 x 14 inches on 16 x 20 inch fine art watercolour paper. The short dimension of every painting has a deckled edge:



I hope you enjoyed reading about how I approached making this series. Feel free to let me know if you have any thoughts or questions about these artworks. Here are the final eight artworks.

Michael C





About

Michael Christidis is a Canadian artist who is best known for his luminous multi-layered paintings depicting wilderness landscapes and shorelines. Like many Canadians, Christidis grew up with romantic notions of the Canadian landscape and a respect for the great painters who wove the fabric of Canadian national identity. He became fascinated with nature, and this encouraged him to explore the world around him through drawing, painting and photography from an early age.

Living in a country like Canada, with its vast untamed wilderness, dramatic scenery, diverse geology and four seasons, allowed the artist to develop a profound connection with, and appreciation of, the forces of raw nature. His landscape work directly conveys his deep respect for nature and its subtle, yet powerful, beauty and offers unusual and personal glimpses of breathtaking scenery.

Christidis' body of work is the product of a lifetime of refining his creative approach which is documented and illustrated in a sixty-page, freely available ebook on MichaelCArtist.com. From his formal studies of design, art history, still photography and film, to years of experimentation with mediums, techniques and aesthetics and professional work experience, to his writings about artistic intent and creativity, Christidis has left no stone unturned in his quest for a cultivated methodology that he can truly call his own.

Christidis has exhibited in Canada and the United States.

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